

editor's message



Give Credit to IU

Sometimes I think Indiana University does not get nearly enough credit for all of the good it does for the Bloomington community. Now and then, I also hear criticism that with IU's sights set on globalization, the town that's home to IU's main campus gets overlooked.

In this issue there are two stories that belie that criticism and illustrate how, without fanfare, IU is serving Bloomington in meaningful, hands-on ways.

On page 52, there is an article about researchers at the IU School of Optometry who are developing a portable device that can scientifically detect concussions right on the sidelines of athletic events. Bloomington high school sports teams are among the first to test this device. It will be a faster and more accurate assessment for concussions than anything being used today.

This research is reminiscent of the development of fluoride toothpaste by three IU scientists in the early 1950s. They perfected a cavity-preventing prototype toothpaste — ultimately Crest — and the first to benefit from it were 1,500 Bloomington children, 400 adults, and IU President Herman B Wells.

On page 108, you'll find a feature story about Serve IT, a service-learning course offered by the IU School of Informatics and Computing. What Serve IT does is send small teams of students to area nonprofit organizations, say the Boys & Girls Clubs of Bloomington, and helps them, at no charge, with their information technology needs — websites, databases, whatever. And, get this, Serve IT provides maintenance indefinitely.

Serve IT has been in place since 2011. It has helped more than 45 area nonprofits and more than 330 students have participated — many of them women and minorities, one of the objectives of the program.

The driving force behind Serve IT is IU first lady Laurie Burns McRobbie, who by the way, seems to be everywhere in the community, more active and effective, I've been told by many longtime activists, than any first lady in memory.

As a small business owner, I know what an incredible asset it would be to have IT experts on my side, on call, and at no charge. I wish.

Bloom Magazine has taken advantage of one gratis consulting program that IU offers to nonprofits and businesses. It's called BKD/Graduate Accounting Consulting Program operating under the inspired direction of James N. Grandorf, clinical professor of accounting. We've used this service twice to great satisfaction.

Each fall semester for the past 19 years, teams of Kelley School of Business graduate accounting students fan out into the community to help develop business and marketing plans, fundraising strategies, tax planning, business development, research, expansion opportunities, and more. In all, the program has consulted with more than 350 organizations.

This past fall, the graduate accounting students undertook 25 projects for such diverse clients as Volunteers In Medicine, John Bethel Title Company, The Tailored Fit, Stepping Stones, Lotus Festival, Premier Healthcare, Janko's Little Zagreb, Stone Belt, and WonderLab Museum of Science, Health, and Technology.

There are many more outreach programs like these. So the next time you hear people say that IU isn't taking an active enough role in our community, you can tell them to shut the front door. Or better yet, enlighten them.

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